

would be harmful to national security. Continued protection of this information is, therefore, in the paramount interest of the United States.

The Determination was not intended to imply that in the absence of a Presidential exemption RCRA or any other provision of law permits or requires the disclosure of classified information to unauthorized persons, but rather to eliminate any potential uncertainty arising from a district court decision in pending litigation, *Kasza v. Browner* (D. Nev. CV-S-94-795-PMP), the relevant appeal which, was subsequently dismissed as moot (9th Cir. Nos. 96-15535 and 96-15537; decided January 8, 1998).

The Determination also was not intended to limit the applicability or enforcement of any requirement of law applicable to the Air Force's operating location near Groom Lake except those provisions, if any, that would require the disclosure of classified information.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on February 2.

Remarks on Submitting the 1999 Federal Budget February 2, 1998

Thank you very much for that warm welcome. Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Vice President, Mr. Bowles, members of our economic team, members of the Cabinet, and administration. And I thank the large numbers—large number of Members of Congress who have come here today, and others, all of you here, for the submission of the first balanced budget in 30 years, one that will truly strengthen our Nation for the 21st century.

This budget marks the end of an era, an end to decades of deficits that have shackled our economy, paralyzed our politics, and held our people back. It can mark the beginning of a new era of opportunity for a new "American Century."

Consider what has been achieved in so short a time. In the 12 years before I took office, trickle-down economics led to an explosion in the Federal deficit which quadrupled our national debt in only 12 years. Government deficits soaked up trillions of dollars in capital that should have been used for productive investment. Massive deficits led to high interest rates that slowed growth. And massive deficits also paralyzed the Congress in their attempts to invest in our future, as we spent more and more of the taxpayers' dollars just to pay interest on the debt we had run up.

The new economy was being held back by old political ideas and arrangements. The deficit was more than an economic reality; it was a

powerful symbol that Government had simply failed to meet its most basic obligations. And doing something about the deficit was one of the reasons I ran for President in 1992.

The day I took office, the deficit was projected to be about \$300 billion for that year. For 5 years, beginning in 1993, as the Vice President said, the Congress and the American people have worked tirelessly to put our economic house in order; we have worked hard here to put our fiscal house in order. The Government is the smallest it's been in 35 years. And deficit reduction has given us lower interest rates, higher investment, and, I might add, lower unemployment, more taxpayers, and more funds to invest in America's future.

That is the gamble we took in 1993—a gamble now that I thought was not such a gamble at all. But it did, as the Vice President said, cost several Members of Congress their jobs. Wherever they are today—wherever they are—I hope they know and remember that we passed that budget in '93 by one vote in the Senate and by one vote in the House; we did not have a vote to spare. And everybody that stood up, and especially those who lost their seats, can know they gave 14 million Americans jobs that would not have been there otherwise and a brighter future for all the American people, and I'm very grateful for that.

I also want to point out, as the Vice President did, that the job to be finished and to eliminate

the structural deficit came with the balanced budget agreement last year. And we should applaud all those in both parties who were part of that, because it will not only enable us to achieve a balanced budget, it will enable us to maintain a balanced budget long into the future, if we stay with the disciplined framework that was embraced last year by very large majorities in both Houses of both parties. And that is very important. It's one thing to get the deficit down, another thing to hold it there. And that balanced budget agreement will not only go from a much smaller deficit down to balance but also will hold it there, if we stay with the discipline. We have not done all this work to let it go.

Now, I believe if we will stay with the plan, we can balance the budget without further cuts. Indeed, the balanced budget I submitted shows we can balance the budget and still hire 100,000 new teachers and modernize 5,000 schools. We can balance the budget and allow hundreds of thousands of middle-aged Americans who have no health insurance through no fault of their own to buy into Medicare. We can balance the budget and still extend child care to a million more children. And above all, we can balance the budget and save Social Security first.

In other words, it is obvious that you can have a smaller Government but a more progressive one that gives you a stronger America. We've done more than simply balance the budget, more than just line up numbers on a ledger. We have restored the balance of values in our policy, restored the balance of confidence between Government and the public. Now, we'll have a balanced budget not only next year but as far as the eye can see.

We have to use this opportunity to build a stronger America. And let's just talk about that. First and foremost, we project that the budget will not only balance, it will actually run a surplus of \$9.5 billion next year and over \$200 billion over the next 5 years, fully \$1 trillion over the next 10 years. This budget reserves that surplus—I want to say it again—this budget reserves that surplus, saving it until we have taken the steps necessary to strengthen Social Security into the next century.

One of the reasons that balancing the budget has been hard is that we have insisted on a balanced budget that honors our values. Finding a way to reduce red ink without shrinking the circle of opportunity has been at the heart of

our efforts. And when we started, most people said you couldn't do it. They said there is no way to cut the rest of Government enough to reduce the deficit and increase investment in important areas. But that is an important achievement as well.

Now it is most important of all that we balance the budget while renewing our commitment to save Social Security. When I left Washington last week and went to Champaign, Illinois, and La Crosse, Wisconsin, I was moved by the strength and depth of the American people's priority for the surplus they created. I think they want us to save Social Security first, as well. And I hope all of you, and Members of Congress in both parties, will support that.

We have a great opportunity now to take action now to avert a crisis in the Social Security system. We have a great opportunity now to be able to tell all these young people who are shadowing their Cabinet and administration leaders that Social Security will be there for them when they retire. We have a great opportunity, those of us in the baby boom generation, to tell our own children that when we retire and start drawing Social Security, it isn't going to bankrupt them to take care of us and undermine their ability to take care of their own children. We need to do this. We don't need to take any shortcuts; we don't need to take any short-term benefits. Before we do anything with that surplus, let's save Social Security first. *[Applause]* Thank you.

The budget continues our efforts at education reform. As I said, it enables us to hire 100,000 new teachers working with States, to reduce class size to an average of 18 in the first, second, and third grades, and to help modernize or build 5,000 schools. It helps to give our parents the tools they need to meet their responsibilities at home and at work, among other things allowing people between the ages of 55 and 65 who lose their health insurance to buy into the Medicare program. It includes a breakthrough investment in child care through tax credits, vouchers for States, scholarships for caregivers.

It will help America to meet its obligations in international leadership, meet our obligations to stabilize the world's financial markets, to pay our dues to the United Nations, to continue our support of our military so that our men and women in uniform can continue to do the job for us.

It will provide tax cuts in research and development to help meet the challenge of global climate change in a way that enables us to grow the economy while actually improving the environment. It continues to support our urban empowerment strategy, bringing more private sector investments to our hardest-pressed cities and neighborhoods while continuing to put 100,000 police officers on the streets and giving our children something to do after school, so more of them can stay out of trouble and on a path to success.

It will leave to future generations the gift of scientific and medical advances. The 21st century research fund, the largest funding increases ever for the National Institute of Health, the National Science Foundation, and the National Cancer Institute, will speed the progress of biomedical breakthroughs in the fight against many of our deadliest diseases.

The budget funds these initiatives by continued cuts in Government programs, by closing unwarranted tax loopholes, and from the passage of tobacco legislation, which, as every passing day shows, is critically important to the future of our children and therefore of our country.

This budget meets the test I set out before Congress last week: no new spending initiatives,

no new tax cuts unless they can actually be accomplished without adding a dime to the deficit. For more than two centuries, Americans have strengthened our Nation at every critical moment with confidence, unity, a determination to meet every challenge. For too long, the budget deficit, a worsening crime wave, the seemingly unsolvable welfare difficulties—they all seemed to challenge our innate American confidence. In the past 5 years, the American people have met these challenges and have moved to master them. Now we have a chance, in a period of peace and prosperity with renewed confidence, to build for the future. That's what this balanced budget does.

Now, it is—I am going to close my remarks now by asking the Vice President to give me a magic marker so that I can be the first person to actually certify what the budget will say for the coming year. Even we can do this. I am technologically challenged; therefore, we're not doing this on a computer. [*Laughter*]

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:44 a.m. in the East Room at the White House. At the end of his remarks, he wrote "\$0!" on a poster labeled "1999 Deficit."

Statement on Land and Water Conservation Fund Acquisitions

February 2, 1998

Last spring, in concluding an historic balanced budget agreement with the Congress, one of my highest priorities was ensuring the funds needed to continue our efforts to protect America's natural treasures. With those funds now appropriated, I am pleased that today Secretaries Babbitt and Glickman are transmitting to Congress a list of sites that are particularly precious to Americans and deserving of our stewardship.

Each of the 100 sites on this list represents an important piece of America's natural and historic legacy. With these acquisitions, we will put the finishing touches on the renowned Appalachian Trail and secure critical winter range for Yellowstone's bison and elk. We will rebuild salmon runs in the Pacific Northwest and protect an ancient caldera in New Mexico that is

home to one of the country's largest elk herds. We will preserve Civil War battlefields where Americans fought and died. We will safeguard vital swaths of this great land literally from coast to coast.

I am extremely proud of our success in preserving Yellowstone, the Everglades, Lake Tahoe, and the red rock canyons of Utah. The budget I submit today to Congress—the first balanced budget in a generation—will allow us to save even more of America's natural and historic treasures. I am confident that with the bipartisan support of Congress, we can continue not only to protect but to restore nature's magnificent gifts. Together, we can assure that future generations know and enjoy this land in all its true splendor.